



BROOKHAVEN NATIONAL LABORATORY  
 ASSOCIATED UNIVERSITIES, INC., UPTON, L.I., N.Y. 11973

706856

MEDICAL DEPARTMENT

TELEPHONE: (516) 345-3577

June 19, 1975

Mr. Oscar DeBrum  
 District Administrator  
 Marshall Island District  
 TRUST TERRITORY PACIFIC ISLANDS  
 Majuro, Marshall Islands 96960

REPOSITORY DOE-FORRESTAL  
 COLLECTION MARKET FILES  
 BOX No. 6 of 6  
 FOLDER MARSHALLESE AGREEMENT  
MARSHALLESE COMMUNITY WORK

Dear Oscar:

As a result of our trip to Bikini last April I have several suggestions of which Murph Ownby may have relayed to you.

First of all I was concerned that the people living on Bikini were short on vitamins and some other nutrients due largely to the absence of fresh fruits and vegetables. I recommend that the Health Aide routinely distribute multivitamins tablets to the population there. This is particularly important for the children. Would it be possible for your ship to bring coconuts, pandanus and breadfruit from other atolls to supplement the Bikini diet?

Second you will remember the Ad Hoc Committee recommended a calcium supplement to the diet of the Bikinians. This is presumed to reduce the absorption of radioactive strontium. We have looked into this and believe that powdered milk is the least expensive and most feasible source of calcium. It is true that some of the Marshallese people have some degree of intolerance for milk. We found on Rongelap among 10 children tested 3-4 had mild to moderate abdominal symptoms from milk but we do not believe this is severe enough to hinder absorption of adequate amounts. Even though pandanus and other sources of <sup>90</sup>Sr are not available yet and we have seen only very low strontium levels in the people. I believe we should at this time begin supplementing the diet of the Bikinians with powdered milk so that they can learn to like it and use it in various food and drink preparations. In addition it is an excellent source of protein.

I noted that each family unit was responsible for gathering laboriously by hand clean coral for their yards. I suggest that some mechanical means of screening larger amounts of coral be done by the builders. This would allow for additional thickness of coral around the houses which would further reduce gamma radiation. I was worried about the water situation on Bikini, it was true that when we were there it was near the end of the dry season, but there was hardly enough water (we were told) for the people even using all of the cisterns of the un-

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occupied houses. One problem was that many of the cisterns leaked. Jeremiah, the Health Aide was short on some drugs and we were able to leave him a supply.

I hope things are going well with the latest Bikini survey and that progress can be made in getting the people back.

With best regards.

Sincerely,



Robert A. Conard, M.D.

RAC:im

CC: E.E. Johnson  
J. Iaman  
Dept of Interior  
DBER, ERDA

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